



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

**New York/New Jersey VA Health Care Network  
VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System**

76 Veterans Avenue | Bath, NY 14810  
607-664-4000  
[www.bath.va.gov](http://www.bath.va.gov)

400 Fort Hill Avenue | Canandaigua, NY 14424  
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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System (Bath and Canandaigua VA Medical Centers) encourages Veterans to leave smoking behind during yearly Great American Smoke Out**

**Finger Lakes Region** — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is encouraging Veterans to take the first step, Nov. 19, to stop smoking as part of the annual [Great American Smoke Out to](#) improve their physical and mental health by combining cessation counseling with other VA clinical resources and support.

[Research](#) shows behavioral counseling can significantly improve one's chances of quitting and combining counseling and medication works better than medication or counseling alone.

"VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System transitioned to a smoke free campus in 2019. This transition to a smoke free and healthier environment for our patients and staff has been very successful. We continue to provide Veterans and employees support and resources if they want to quit smoking and live a healthier lifestyle" said Bruce Tucker, director VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System.

VA Finger Lakes smoking cessation coaching programs are one of the most effective tools available for Veterans who want to permanently stop smoking. VA health care providers can help Veterans explore the role tobacco plays in their daily routine, including the activities or situations that trigger someone to use tobacco products. These triggers can include talking on the phone, drinking coffee or alcohol or feeling bored or stressed. VA providers work with Veterans to develop strategies

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for coping with those triggers and to tailor plans for quitting that will fit into each Veteran's everyday life.

In addition to counseling, VA provides other services designed to help Veterans stop smoking, including prescription medications, nicotine-replacement products like gum and patches and resources such as [Quit VET](#) and [SmokefreeVET](#).

For more information about tobacco cessation, contact Vic Bridges, LCSW at (585-393-7356) and [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco).

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